

LOWER FREDERICK TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes December 21, 2017 53 Spring Mount Road/Schwenksville, Pa. 19473

Meeting called to order at 7:01 pm.

Present for Roll Call:

Members:

Chuck Yeiser, Chairman
Ernie Schmitt, Vice Chairman
Philip A. Smith, Secretary
Hans Schweikert
Ranier Keown
Barb Colletti (late)
Pam Hartman

Township Staff:

Carol Schuehler, Township Engineer
Kevin Tobias, Manager

Other Township Officials Present:

Bob Yoder, Chairman LFT Board of Supervisors
Ron Kerwood, Vice Chairman LFT Board of Supervisors
Terry Sacks, LFT Supervisor

MCPC:

Donna Fabry, Community Planner
Julia Detwiler, Community Planner

1.. Motion to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2017 Lower Frederick Township Planning Commission Meeting.

motion: Erie Schmitt
second: Chuck Yeiser

The motion carries unanimously

2. General Public Comments:

Mrs. Crystal Gilchrist, Gerloff Road requested that the protocol for public inquiry and comments be defined in advance of the agenda item, "The Sacks and Sons Land Development".

Response to Mrs. Gilchrist:

Mr. Charles Yeiser, LFTPC Chairman outlined the protocol for how the Planning Commission was to proceed with the evening's presentations and resulting discussions concerning the first Sacks and Sons Land Development Preliminary and Final Plan review.

4. Sacks and Son Land Development- Big Road and Circle Drive, Zieglerville Village at the Rt.29/73 Round-a-bout represented by the applicants, Mr. Matt Sacks and Mr. Terry Sacks, property owners

The Sacks and Sons Land Development application consists of three adjoining parcels being combined into one land development project within the Village Mixed Use Zoning area. As noted by the township engineer, the proposed project consists of five new buildings, the retention of two existing buildings, and the demolition of two existing structures. Note: Impact Engineering Group produced the plans for the design of the project. An Impact Engineering Group representative was not present to support the presentation of the Preliminary and Final Plan at the December 21, 2017 LFTPC meeting.

Mr. Yeiser, LFTPC Chairman defined for those present the Village Mixed Use (Section #170-85) Zoning's background. He read the VMU's Legislative Intent to those present, and explained its references to the Region's Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Carol Schuehler, Township Engineer provided those in attendance with an abridged summary of her Sacks Land Development Review Letter dated December 18, 2017. Within that presentation Ms. Schuehler provided the history and evolution of the current plan from March 2017 to the present. Ms. Schuehler also explained the progression of the future reviews and planning for the project, plus the need for the conditional use hearing for inclusion of a drive-thru, warehouse use, and parking reduction. It was emphasized that no approvals have been granted yet to the project.

Notable LFTPC and Public Comments, Input, Discussions, and Positions:

Ms. Carol Schuehler, Township Engineer- recommended that with the degree of complexity and the needs of both the Township and the applicant a "phasing sequence would benefit this land development". For example, one of the conditions to be imposed on the plan's approval could be that of requiring sequencing the definitions of required parking since individual building types can't be determined with the current application's submission and the Township and applicants's interests would best be served as the building usages were eventually determined.

Mr. Yeiser, LFTPC chairman- expressed, the applicant has submitted a plan which indicates that 85% of the proposed new construction would be "warehousing". In his opinion, this greatly exceeds the Zieglerville Village's VMU Legislative Intent parameters.

Ms. Schuehler, Township Engineer recommended that the plan's indicated private access road be built to Township road standards. Mr. Matt Sacks, Applicant responded that this issue would be accommodated.

Ms. Schuehler, Township Engineer, noted that sidewalks along the Big Road frontage of the development need to be provided. Mr. Sacks responded they would address this issue. Mr. Ernie Schmitt, LFTPC Vice Chairman stated that it was his opinion that the sidewalk requirements are a necessity, however he felt that a standard code compliant concrete sidewalk would serve both the applicant and the township, therefore it wasn't necessary for the applicant to provide decorative stamped sidewalks as is found at the roundabout.

Ms. Schuehler, Township Engineer raised a question about planned existing paved parking and existing site entry (Swamp Creek Rod and Gun Club access lane) at Building #7. Matt Sacks stated that the Rod and Club's currently access will be removed and replaced by the proposed private drive off Circle Drive at the CVS store. The space once occupied by the drive and paved parking will be included in the green space to the roundabout side of the proposed Dunkin Donuts.

Mrs. Crystal Gilchrist raised a concern for the visual impact of the look of the proposed Dunkin Donuts establishment's drive through lanes (pick up and by-pass) from those passing by at the roundabout. Options were discussed such as moving the establishment back a distance to allow for more green space, to using plantings to obscure the paved lanes, to perhaps adding a low rise landscape buffer wall and berm. The applicant agreed to consider possible options, to work to rectify this concern.

Mrs. Crystal Gilchrist, Gerloff Road- expressed that a traffic impact study is an absolute necessity for a project of this significance and scope. The Township Engineer review letter dated December 18, 2017 Chapter #170 and the County's Review Letter Dated December 21, 2107 comments also cite this .

Mr. Phil Smith, LFTPC-raised the question of the County's proposed bikeway from Schwenksville Borough to Sunrise Mill being routed by the Sacks and Son Big Road side of the site. Mr. Smith suggested that the County and the applicant could perhaps benefit by coordinating their planning efforts at this time. Mrs. Julia Detwiler, MCPC added that the County is very willing to work with the applicant(s) on the issue of the area along the Swamp Creek's conservation and possible trail easement. Mr.Sacks replied they would be willing to engage them in that conversation.

Mrs. Marla Hexter, LFT Supervisor Elect- expressed that she is in full support of encouraging pedestrian use of the Sacks Land Development Site as well as throughout the Zieglerville Village.

Gail Gosser, Gerloff Road- expressed the support of planning that enables pedestrians to utilize the Zieglerville Village and to have access to a connected Lower Frederick Township. She stated" The Sacks Land Development is part of a bigger picture".

Ron Kerwood, Vice Chairman LFTBOS- conveyed in order to support additional local businesses the area has to increase its population base. In his opinion, currently the Township and associated area does not have a large enough population base to support substantial new business development.

Mrs. Julia Detwiler, MCPC Community Planner's presented a summary of her review letter dated December 21, 2017. Within her presentation Mrs. Detwiler defined a number of items to be considered by the Township. Noted within were:

1. Zoning Ordinance items
 - A. Conditional Use Standards, #170-90-.6 A and #170-90-.6B.
 - B. Shared parking Reduction, #170-131.A
 - C. Architectural Character, Section #170-90-A.1
 - D. Traffic impact Study, Section 170-36.C(1)
 - E. Driveway Standards, Section #145-30.B.2
2. Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance items
 - A. Conservation of Vegetation, Section #145-42.A
 - B. Street Trees, Section #145-42-B3.c
 - C. Plant Selection, Section #145-43
3. Development of Regional Significance- need for CPVRPC input and comment
4. Flood Plan Protection and Potential Trail Easement
5. Parking Lot Design Issues
 - A. Parking Lot Circulation
 - B. handicapped Parking
6. Private Roads
7. Lighting

Mrs. Julia Detwiler's review concludes that at the present time the Sacks and Sons Land Development plan is not able to be supported for approval by the MCPC.

Additional Notable LFTPC and Public Comments, Input, Discussions and Positions:

Mr. Bob Yoder, Chairman LFTBOS questioned the number of street trees required and the placement of them. The MCPC review states that 14 street trees would be required at the Sacks land

Development and the recommendation is that they be install for flexibility design and for optimum planting success.

Mr. Ron Kerwood, Vice Chairman LFTBOS- questioned whether or not the Sacks and Sons Land Development should be required to complete a traffic impact study, and also noted that he supports utilizing a “phasing of the development plan”.

Mr. Philip Smith, LFTPC member- raised the point that the VMU District provides for a mixing of usages and questioned if the applicant has considered the incorporation of residential uses as part of their planning. Mr. Matt Sacks reply was that they have not considered this as an option. It was brought to his attention that the adjoining Village by the Pond Development within the VMU District does successfully employ residential uses. Mr. Al Manning, developer of the Village by the Pond added that his development does incorporate both residential and offices spaces above the retail/commercial space within the Village by the Pond. Mr. Smith also made note that the Township has and will see increasing traffic issues therefore the plan indicated “private access drive way should be considered for a possible future township connection road for the Zieglerville Village to Gerloff Road.

Mrs. Pam Hartman, LFTPC- expressed that the plan buildings labeled warehouses (#2, #3, #4. and #5) be designed to reflect a Pennsylvania traditional barn look. It is Mrs Hartmans’s belief that this reflects the historic past of the Township and could serve to be a strong design guide for the site’s new architecture.

Mrs. Crystal Gilchrist, Gerloff Road- expressed concerns about increased traffic resulting from the proposed development and impacts the view-shed from roundabout into the development resulting from its location and close proximity of the proposed Dunkin Donuts establishment to the Zieglerville Roundabout.

Dan Orr, Kratz Road- expressed concerns about the designation of warehouse and possible ramifications of not having what type indicated nor any associated architectural design indicated on the preliminary/final plan.

Mr. Terry Sacks cited that although the CVS site does have an increased green space to its roundabout frontage the WAWA site across from his project area does not. Mr. Yeiser pointed out the WAWA project predated the adoption of the VMU Zoning Ordinance and the CVS project was done under VMU Zoning.

Joyce Clarkson, Little Road- expressed her concern for lack of any architectural design information on the presented plan and feels that this project warrants requiring architectural designs to be integral to the approval process.

Mr. Bill MCGovern-, Memorial Drive- raised issues of concern related to the existing Swamp Creek Rod and Gun Club’s close proximity to the proposed Development. Mr. McGovern also pointed out that the extensive green space/park between the CVS store and Roundabout was the result of Mr. Al Manning granting a land donation for that to happen. The open space that the residents enjoy was from Mr. Manning’s partnering with the Township at the time of his land development the donation of the land that ensued was a result of that working partnership. Mr. Matt Sacks stated that their proposed development plan purposely placed warehouse, Building #4 in an alignment to buffer the other development areas from the Rod and Gun Club’s noise and activities.

Mr. Bob Yoder, LFTBOS- raised uses and questions about the region’s problems with increased retail capacity and development citing the example of the Landis Supermarket at the Shelly Square Shopping Center as one local center that can’t keep its tenants. Mrs. Crystal Gilchrist offered from her experience in professional planning this is a result of the cycling economy, the number of establishments, and the composition of the surrounding community that it exists within.

Mrs. Barb Colletti, LFTPC- requested that Mr. Sacks try to attract a Planet Fitness to his Zieglerville Village project.

Mrs. Marla Hexter, LF Supervisor Elect- stated that the Zieglerville Village Roundabout's location is the focal point of that area our Township, and thus should be considered extremely important to our township's development.

Mr. Philip Smith, LFTPC Member- provided the LFTPC members, associated staff, and the applicant with a concept drawing and accompanying supporting text for possible considerations, revisions and/or improvements to the Sacks and Son's plan. Mr. Smith expressed that since this was the first review of the presented plan, his material provides the applicant with suggestions for evolving and refining the November 1, 2017 plan toward a result that more closely fits the intent of the Zieglerville Village Mixed Use Zoning. Mr. Matt Sacks stated that they would review and consider Mr. Smith's ideas.

LF Planning Commission's Positions:

1. The Lower Frederick Township Planning Commission recommends and supports a "phased approval process" for the Sacks and Sons Land Development application. Such a process provides benefits to the applicant and enables the Township to align the project in order to facilitate its stated development goals for the Zieglerville Village. This methods also provides for greater support of the CPVRPC Comprehensive Plan Goals within in the process.

2. The Lower Frederick Township Planning Commission supports a traffic impact study to be part of the Sacks and Sons Land Development, and is in support of its inclusion as a required condition by the Lower Frederick Township Board of Supervisors.

3. The Lower Frederick Township Planning Commission supports the concept of shared parking within the Zieglerville Village, and therefore would be receptive to a recommendation allowing the applicant the possibility of reduced required parking within the plan if shared parking (within the development and associated village) is reasonable to the defined usages.

4. The Lower Frederick Township Planning Commission feels the architecture and associated landscaping of the proposed buildings is an important and integral component to the planning of the Sacks and Sons Land Development project. The LFTPC recommend that the applicant prepare site architectural images for presentation as per the discussion of Dec. 21, 2017.

5. The Lower Frederick Township Planning Commission requests that the applicant review the township engineer's, the MCPC's, and the LFT Planning Commission's considerations, comments, and positions with their engineer in order to further the future progress on the Sacks and Sons Preliminary and Final Land Development Plan, dated November 1, 2017.

Mr. Chuck Yeiser, LFTPC Chairman- expressed thanks to Terry and Matt Sacks for their time and efforts to work with the Township's planners. Mr. Yeiser invited them to return to the Planning Commission in January 2018 in order to move their project along in its planning review process. The Sacks responded that they wished to accept that invitation.

3. Barb Colletti- Client Based Exploratory Question, 115 Spring Mount Road, Spring Mount

As a real estate agent, Barb Colletti wished to bring the question of possible development to the Planning Commission for its opinion on the potential for a deeded three parcel site being combine into two parcels for eventual sale as two separate properties. The proposed concept would face Crystal Drive, but would utilize Riverside as the road for one driveway access.

The LFTPC deferred to Carol Schuehler, Township Engineer for guidance and recommendations. Ms. Schuehler explained that Riverside is a “paper road” and not a dedicated public road. Therefore, the proposed lots must be provided with frontage on Main Street unless Riverside Avenue were to be improved and dedicated to the Township. It was Ms. Schuehler’s recommendation that Mrs. Colletti and/or her client seek that counsel from the Township Zoning Officer prior to any further action on the idea.

The LFTPC supported that recommendation.

4. Motion to adjourn.

motion- Ranier Keown
second- Chuck Yeiser

motion carries

meeting concluded at 9:40 pm.

